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Venetian-Ottoman Wars

EDITED BY STATHIS BIRTACHAS

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On the cover: lantern of an Ottoman galley captured at Lepanto.
Venice, Armory rooms of the Council of Ten at the Doge's Palace.
Topwar.ru website of Vjačeslav Špakovsky.

Venice and the Ottoman Empire as warriors. Source: [Roger PALMER, *Earl of Castlemaine], Das von den Türcken auffs äusserst bedrangte, aber: Durch die christliche Waffen der heroischen Republic Venedig auffs tapfferst beschützte Candia* […], Frankfurt, Wilhelm Serlin, 1669.

"Oltremarini" (Overseas) Regiments in Venetian service, nicknamed 'Schiavoni'
(Vinkhujzen Collection, NYPL)

Destined to lead nowhere?

Venice, the Ottoman Empire and the Geography and Technology of War in the Early Modern Mediterranean, c. 1530–1715*

by Phillip Williams**

Abstract: It was, or would have been, extremely difficult for Venice or Constantinople to instigate a "military revolution" in the early modern Mediterranean. Fortresses, harbours and ships-of-the-line faced numerous logistical, geographical and manpower limitations, while many garrisons lacked the resolve to defend their redoubts and keeps. Operational concerns (moving supplies, or finding water and horses) shaped campaign outcomes. The great powers were unable to fight in more than one theatre of action and depended upon the constant circulation of resources. Galleys were decisive. The mixed-vessel taskforce emerged as a polyvalent form of campaigning. On a strategic level, offensives in the Levant cannot be separated from events in central Europe. The Mediterranean remained in the limelight after 1580, in spite of the huge wastage involved in fighting. Conflicts were shaped by political, not military, priorities.

Keywords: Galleys, military revolution, fortresses, crusade, gaza, operational warfare.

Many historians have been drawn to the idea of a "military revolution", a transformation in fighting capabilities and organisation as a result of the advent of gunpowder weaponry at the end of the Renaissance. In regard to naval affairs, it is argued that improvements in cannon, sails and bureaucratic abilities led to the emergence of powerful fleets of galleons, dread-

* This paper is dedicated to don Hugo O'Donnell y Duque de Estrada in gratitude and admiration.

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noughts, or men-o'-war: these were ships-of-the-line, high-sided, sail-driven and designed primarily for the challenges of warfare in the Atlantic and North Sea.[1] A new type of battlement was another manifestation of the advance in tactics, organisation and technology in the sixteenth-century. An innovative design of fortresses with thick, low, angular walls was pioneered in Italy (the *trace italienne* style), and its widespread adoption meant that the reduction of major positions now became the key objective of warfare. The need to overcome modern *trace italienne* fortresses, built to control key strategic anchorages, helped to end «the Mediterranean system of warfare at sea».[2]

Like many grand historical interpretations, the military revolution thesis perhaps overlooks some details, what is sometimes called the "strategic geography" of warfare. Sailing was not quite as simple a process as has been assumed, many harbours being difficult to enter. As Hugo O'Donnell has pointed out, maritime regulations issued by the Madrid government in the early seventeenth-century were designed to address the difficulties posed by the sands and ridges that lay at many harbour mouths in the Atlantic. To this end, no ship was to be built that exceeded 550 tons «in contemplation of the banks at the entrances».[3]

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1 John H. Pryor, *Geography, technology, and war: studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649–1571*, Cambridge, Past and Present, 1988; Carlo M. Cipolla, *Guns, Sails and Empires. Technological Innovation and the Early Phases of European Expansion, 1400–1700*, Manhattan (Kansas), Sunflower University Press, 1985; Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea, 1500–1650, Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe*, London and New York, Routledge, 2000; Clifford J. Rogers (Ed.), *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1995; Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800*, 2nd edition Cambridge, CUP, 1996 (1st edition 1988); Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1998.

2 John Francis Guilmartin, Jr., *Gunpowder and Galleys. Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare at Sea in the 16th Century*, 2nd edition, London, Conway Maritime Press, 2003; see also Pryor, *Geography, technology and war*, cit., chapter VII «The Turks», (quotation p. 177). On fortresses, see Christopher Duffy, *The Fortress in the Age of Vauban and Frederick the Great, 1660–1789. Siege Warfare Volume II*, London etc., Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985, chapter VIII.

3 «[…] en contemplación por las entradas de las barras». Hugo O'Donnell y Duque de Estrada, «Función militar en las flotas de Indias», in Idem (Ed.), *Historia Militar de España. III Edad Moderna. I. Ultramar y la Marina*, Madrid, CEHM & RAH, 2012, pp. 81-119, esp. 99. Professor Patrick Williams has kindly pointed out to me that the new *ordenanzas* regarding hulls came in response to the loss of the treasure ships in 1607.

In the Mediterranean a slightly different set of circumstances and problems prevailed. Many ports offered anchorages that were vulnerable to fireships and bombardment.[4] In August 1639 it was thought likely that Venice's *stato da mar* would be attacked by an Ottoman force. The government of Philip IV of Spain (1621–1665) gave orders that his Atlantic galleons – all of which were of at least 600 tonnes, the existing instructions (above) to build smaller ships having apparently had little or no effect – were to sail with 20 reinforced galleys to assist the Doge and Senate. But it specified that the king's flotillas could not remain «in the Levant» in winter on account of the «narrowness» of these seas and the fact that they offered few deep-water harbours.[5] Feeding and protecting an armada when it was in port was another challenge. Fleets anchored in Palermo (June 1676) and Toulon (1707) suffered major damage as the result of attacks: in the latter case, the loss of Louis XIV's men-o'-war facilitated the Austrian conquest of Naples.[6]

There were relatively few defendable forward positions offering a sheltered anchorage, cellars, cisterns, reliable modern fortifications and a productive hinterland. One of the signal characteristics of the campaigns of the early 1570s was precisely the difficulty faced by Christian commanders in identifying a viable target in the Levant. Once Cyprus had fallen to the Ottomans (Famagusta's garrison surrendered on 1 August 1571), it was difficult, if not impossible, to see how the ambitions of the Holy League could be squared with the conditions on

4 The arguments presented here are set out at greater length in Phillip Williams, *Empire and Holy War in the Mediterranean. The Galley and Maritime Conflict between the Habsburgs and Ottomans*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2014 (in regards to fortresses, chapter IX). See also Phillip Williams, «Mare Nostrum? Reform, Recruitment and the Business of Crusade in the Fleets of the Seventeenth Century Mediterranean», *Storia Economica*, XIX, 1 (2016), pp. 77-102 (Special issue edited by Mario Rizzo, *Á la guerre comme á la guerre. Attori, risorsi e dinamiche della competizione strategica in Europa e nel Mediterraneo fra XV e XVIII secolo*). For French bombardments of Algiers and Tunis, see Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary, 1589–1689*, Gainsville, University Press of Florida, 2005, pp. 129-130, 141-144.

5 Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter: AGS), Secretaría de Estado (Est.), legajo (leg.) 3582, f. 190, Philip IV to count de la Roca ('Por consulta de 6 de agosto de 1639'), Madrid 8 August 1639.

6 Luis A. Ribot García, *La Monarquía de España y la Guerra de Mesina*, Madrid, Actas, 2002, pp. 93-95; Ciro Paoletti, «Prince Eugene of Savoy, the Toulon Expedition of 1707, and the English Historians: A Dissenting View», *The Journal of Military History*, 70, 4 (2006), pp. 939-962.

the ground.[7] Santa Maura (Levkas or Lefkada), for instance, appears to have been a trap – at least, this was the warning issued by an expert engineer, Felipe Lascari Paleologo, who was, by any standard, an extraordinary figure.[8]

To effect any sort of campaign in the Morea would have required a siege train with a large number of pack animals and carts, which the armada did not have with it. The 1572 expedition ("the Navarino campaign"), was an attempt to seize the position commanding the road to Modon, where the Ottoman fleet had taken shelter. The hope was that by cutting supply lines on both land and sea, the sultan's high admiral or Kapudan Paşa (sometimes "Kaptanpaşa"), Uluç Ali, would be forced to venture out from the anchorage, which he had intelligently fortified.[9] His armada could then be engaged and destroyed, preparing the ground for future offensive and ventures.[10]

In these cases – in 1571 and 1572 – the basic requirement of any plausible offensive campaign in Rhodes, Cyprus or the Morea was that the fleet of the Holy League should have an extended amphibian capability, allowing it to disembark companies of light cavalry that could roam perhaps 10 to 15 miles from the harbour or bridgehead.[11] Horse units clearly played a major role in the Ottoman campaigns on Cyprus and in 1572 don John of Austria, the overall commander, reported, doubtless with a degree of exaggeration, that the beylerbey of Greece arrived to save Navarino with 20,000 horses.[12] Aside from their direct military

7 On the abortive attack on Santa Maura, see David García Hernán and Enrique García Hernán, *Lepanto: el día después*, Madrid, Actas, 1999. Venice made an attempt against the small island early in the following year. Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, Vol. 4, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1976, 1978, 1984, p. 1075.

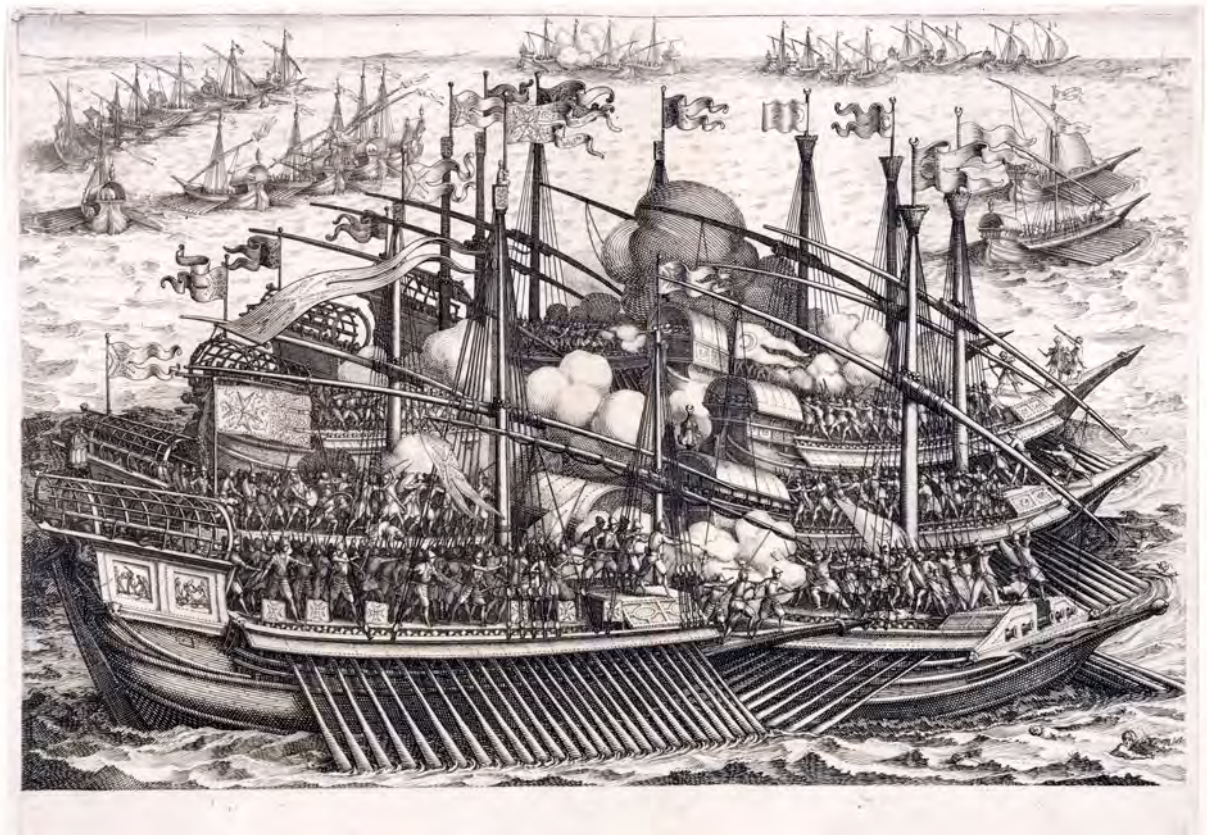
8 He was a renegade Turk, having turned Christian at Malta after an apparition of Our Lady and St John in his dreams. AGS, Secretarias Provinciales, leg. 4, sf «Phelipe Lascari Paleologo capitán que fue del gran Turco».

9 Luciano Serrano, *La Liga de Lepanto entre España, Venecia y la Santa Sede (1570–1572). Ensayo histórico a base de documentos diplomáticos*, Vol. 2, Madrid 1918, pp. 108, 116-117, 125, 128, 131.

10 The expeditionary force was on land from 2 to 5 October. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, translated by Siân Reynolds, Vol. 2, London, Collins, 1972, pp. 1121-1123; Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, cit., Vol. 4, p. 1084 *ff*.

11 In 1572 don John of Austria sought to take a sizeable corpus of cavalry aboard the fleet: in fact, only 200 horses went. Braudel, *Mediterranean*, cit., Vol. 2, p. 1121.

12 AGS, Est., leg. 1401, f. 149, «De Corfu» 13 June 1571; f. 159, «Avisos» 24 June; f. 242



Title: Naval Combat.
Artist: Jacques Callot (France, 1592–1635).
Date: early 17th century.
Medium: Etching.
Accession Number: 40.52.8.
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Comment: Callot's depiction of a naval battle was perhaps based on operations in 1613. Note that Callot portrays the galleys as having relatively round hulls, with high seaboard. This was increasingly the case in the seventeenth-century, as they came to be sailed into October, November and December.

functions and purposes (scouting; communication; guarding supply lines and exposed terrain; raiding enemy camps and stores; and leading charges in battles and skirmishes) horses were needed to pull heavy weapons, water, supplies and

«Avisos» August; don John's colourful account of 1572, in SETTON, *Papacy and the Levant*, cit., Vol. 4, p. 1085.

equipment to and within bastions and forward camps.[13] In 1669 Venice sent a large number of horses to the Levant, «*per montar molti cavalieri*».[14] So important were cavalry units in the campaigns of Francesco Morosini (d. 1694) in the 1680s that they appear to have been given priority on board ships ahead of refugees and even troops.[15] The Venetian garrison left to defend Chios in February 1695 consisted of 500 cavalry, according to Ottoman sources.[16]

But the use of animals came with two costs and restrictions. The first was that there were not, in fact, that many mounts and mules available in Spain, France or Greece.[17] The second major limitation was operational: even when horses and pack animals could be found, their deployment meant that officials had to secure large quantities of water and fodder. This was far from easy. During the brief Venetian occupation of Athens (September 1687 to April 1688) surveys indicated that, factoring in a garrison of 400 men (300 soldiers and 100 valets and servants) and the animals needed to run the Acropolis fort, the fort's cisterns could store water for no more than 50 days.[18]

13 The stradiots or *stradioti* were light cavalry units deployed by Venice in defense and police forces. These companies proved operationally effective, while the financial aspects of their story reinforce the arguments that horses were relatively expensive to maintain. They evolved into the *cappelletti a cavalo* in the seventeenth-century. See Stathis Birtachas, «*Stradioti, Cappelletti, Compagnie* or *Milizie Greche:* 'Greek' Mounted and Foot Mercenary Companies in the Venetian State (Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)», in Georgios Theotokis and Aysel Yildiz (Eds.), *A Military History of the Mediterranean Sea. Aspects of War, Diplomacy, and Military Elites*, Leiden & Boston, Brill, 2018, pp. 325-346.

14 Kenneth M. Setton, *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century*, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1991, p. 220.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 293, 302-303, 339, 342.

16 Svat Soucek, «The Straits of Chios and the Kaptanpaşa's Navy», reproduced in *Studies in Ottoman Naval History and Maritime Geography*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 2011, pp. 147-170, esp. 159.

17 Robert A. Stradling, «Spain's Military Failure and the Supply of Horses, 1600-1660», in *History*, 69, 226 (1984), pp. 208-221; David Parrott, *Richelieu's Army: War, Government and Society in France, 1624–1642*, Cambridge, New York & Port Melbourne, CUP, 2001, pp. 61-62, 99, 68-70, 212, 244, 386, 388. Cf. Siriol Davies, «Administration and Settlement in Venetian Navarino», *Hesperia*, 73, 1 (2004), pp. 59-120.

18 That is, 50 days even after supplies of wine and biscuit had been provided to the garrison. Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., chapters X and XI, esp. pp. 335-336; William Miller, «The Venetian Revival in Greece, 1684–1718», *The English Historical Review*, 35, 139 (1920), pp. 343-366. The threat posed by Ottoman cavalry units based in Thebes, together with enemy control of the Megara pass, was also decisive in forming the assessment that Athens could not be held.

Geographical and climatological features shaped warfare in many other ways. Without doubt, this was a brutal, draining theatre of action. Those troops inured to the fevers and "contagions" of the campaign zone and experienced enough to know how recover from dehydration and exhaustion were consequently much more effective – and far more highly valued – than those soldiers without direct experience of the "trabajos" of the fighting season. It was better, observed an exasperated Spanish official in the 1640s, to have 10 veterans than 50 new recruits.[19] A number of permanent or quasi-permanent marine regiments also acquired a superb array of skills: the *oltremarini* serving Venice and the *tercios de armada* employed by Madrid could both fight and sail and so proved highly effective aboard their flotillas.[20]

What emerged, therefore, was a form of warfare that prioritised mobility and skilled veteran forces, with major, defendable positions being very much the exception to the rule (Rhodes and perhaps Malta and Candia; Monemvasia and Canea under the Ottomans but not, paradoxically, under the Venetians). Indeed, a case could be made that the determination of garrison troops to fight (in 1522, 1539, 1565, 1666–1669 and 1688) was, or came close to being, the decisive consideration, while the inability or unwillingness of so many other guard regiments to do so shaped events in other years.[21] From the beginning, galleys were taken to be decisive: their preservation was certainly the priority for both the Emperor Charles V (1519–1556) and Philip II (1556–1598) of Spain.[22] The surrender of Candia in 1669 was justified by the fact that the terms allowed Morosini to leave the harbour with the fleet, upon which, his defenders pointed

19 Raquel Camarero Pascual, *La Guerra de Recuperación de Cataluña 1640–1652*, Madrid, Actas, 2015, pp. 439-440, 467.

20 Guido Candiani, «Un corpo di polizia marittima: le galeotte veneziane della Dalmazia (1670–1684)», in Livio Antonielli (Ed.), *Extra moenia. Il controllo del territorio nelle campagne e nei piccoli centri*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2013, pp. 39-63; O'Donnell y Duque de Estrada, Hugo, «Función militar», cit.; Phillip Williams, «Captains of Both Professions. Seafaring capacities in the Armada of Charles II of Spain, 1665–1700», in Davide Maffi and Enrique García Hernán (Eds.), *Estudios sobre Guerra y Sociedad*, Madrid, Albatros, 2017, pp. 225-248.

21 An interpretation along these lines has been presented for the great Italian forts by David Parrott, «The utility of fortifications in early modern Europe: Italian princes and their citadels, 1540–1640», *War in History*, 7 (2000), pp. 127-153.

22 Williams, *Empire and Holy War*, cit., pp. 16-17, 43-47, 52, 63-64, 68, 156.

out, the freedom of the Republic of St Mark depended.[23]

The major amphibian campaigns in the Mediterranean began in 1522, when sultan Süleymân I (1520–1566) claimed Rhodes from the Order of Knights of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (the Hospitallers).[24] Ten years later, in September 1532, Doria took 30 or so Christian galleys into the Levant; Patras and Castelnuovo di Cattaro were put to the torch and a garrison installed in Koron.[25] This campaign may have played some role in diverting Süleymân away from a second attack upon Vienna, which he had unsuccessfully besieged three years previously, although other reasons for his abortive move against the Austrian capital appear more convincing.[26] For his part, the sultan certainly expressed his desire to advance the ambitions of Francis I of France (1515–1547) in Italy.[27]

Everything indicates that the sultan took the Christian offensive seriously, as in 1533 he invited Barbarossa Hayreddin (1478? – 1546), a privateer based in Algiers, to serve as his first high admiral or Kapudan Paşa.[28] The Sublime Porte also began to invest dramatically larger sums in its navy.[29] Koron was abandoned by the Christians in the following year, in large part because of the considerable

23 Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., p. 240.

24 In addition to the superb works of Setton and Braudel, already cited, general studies include Géraud Poumarède, *Pour en finir avec la Croisade. Mythes et réalités de la lutte contre les Turcs au XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, Paris, PUF, 2004; Ekkehard Eickhoff, *Venezia, Vienna e i Turchi. Bufera nel sud-est europeo*, Stuttgart, Rusconi, 1991; Salvatore Bono, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo: Cristiani e musulmani fra guerra, schiavitù e commercio*, Milan, Mondadori, 1993; Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream. The History of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1923*, Cambridge (MA), Basic Books, 2005.

25 Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado, «¿Carolus Africanus?: el Emperador y el turco», in José Martínez Millán and Ignacio J. Ezquerra Revilla (Eds.), *Carlos V y la quiebra del humanismo político en Europa (1530-1558)*, Vol. 1, Madrid, SECCCF, 2001, pp. 487-531, esp. 495-499.

26 Williams, *Empire and Holy War*, cit., pp. 31-33; Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, cit., Vol. 3, pp. 355-367.

27 Gülru Necipoğlu, «Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Habsburg-Papal Rivalry», in Halil Inalcik and Cemal Kafadar (Eds.), *Süleymân the Second and His Time*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 1993, pp. 163-191.

28 On the position of high admiral, see the essays in Elizabeth Zachariadou (Ed.), *The Kapudan Pasha, his office and his domain*, Rethymnon, Crete University Press, 2002.

29 Rhoads Murphey, «A Comparative Look at Ottoman and Habsburg Resources and Readiness for War circa 1520 to circa 1570», in Enrique García Hernán and Davide Maffi (Eds.), *Guerra y Sociedad en la Monarquía Hispánica. Política, estrategia y cultura en la Europa moderna (1500–1700)*, Vol. 1, Madrid, Laberinto, 2006, pp. 75-102, esp. 78.

risks involved in sailing Charles V's galleys to it through an Ottoman maritime blockade.[30] There followed campaigns against Tunis in 1534 and 1535.[31] In 1537 Barbarossa returned with the "armada del Turco" to the coastlines of Italy, his intention being to help a prospective rebellion by grandees sympathetic to the French cause in Naples.[32] The campaign against Calabria was a failure, and on his return to the Levant he attacked Corfu, resulting in a brief siege (25 August – 6 September). The defences of the island were up to the task – something of a surprise, given the chaotic nature of the preparations – and the "Turks" were repulsed. The decisive intervention was Süleymân's, who ordered his forces to withdraw: «I would not exchange the life of one of my Janissaries for a thousand such fortresses».[33] The sultan had not, therefore, apparently noticed that an incipient military revolution based upon fortified harbour positions was underway.

If the Christian offensive in 1532 had shocked statesmen in Constantinople, so the scale of the attack in 1537 focused minds in Rome, Madrid and Venice. In February 1538 a Holy League was proclaimed by Pope Paul III Farnese (1534–1549). It effectively ended in the *bataille manqué* of Preveza, although this abortive confrontation, like Doria's intervention in 1532, remains open to interpretation and contextualisation.[34] In 1539 Barbarossa led a huge force to recover Castelnuovo (Herçeg Novi), which Christian forces under Doria had seized at the end of the previous year. Four years later he returned to the "Ponant" (the western Mediterranean) and overwintered his armada in Toulon in 1543–1544. But, as in previous years, the final effects or consequences of this campaign were far from obvious and in 1545 Charles V and Süleymân settled upon a peace

30 Francisco López de Gómara, *"Guerras de mar" del emperador Carlos V*, version edited by Migeul Ángel de Bunes Ibarra and Nora Edith Jiménez, Madrid, SECCCF, 2000, pp. 143-144.

31 Svatopluk Soucek, «Naval Aspects of the Ottoman Conquest of Rhodes, Cyprus and Crete», *Studia Islamica*, 98–99 (2004), pp. 219-261, esp. 227-229.

32 López de Gómara, *"Guerras de mar"*, cit., pp. 184-186.

33 Ottoman chronicles refer, somewhat implausibly, to plans to conquer Italy. Soucek, «Naval Aspects», cit., p. 230.

34 On the holy leagues of the 1530s and 1570s, see Poumarède, *Pour en finir*, cit., pp. 222-245. On 1538, see the essays of Simon Mercieca, «The Battle of Preveza 1538: the Knights of Malta's Perspective», and Emmanuelle Pujeau, «Preveza in 1538: The background of a very complex situation», in *Preveza B. Proceedings of the Second International Symposium for the History and Culture of Preveza*, Preveza, University of Ioannina, 2010, pp. 107-120 and 121-138, respectively.

of sorts. Martin Luther, incidentally, took this accord to be evidence that the Second Coming was imminent.[35]

Venice remained steadfastly neutral in the campaigns of the mid-century, perhaps because of its relative military strength and high degree of preparedness, perhaps because of a realisation that peace in 1540 had come at a great price, having been compelled to surrender Monemvasia and Nauplia, two of the most impressive bastions in the eastern Mediterranean.[36] In 1551 Tripoli was seized by "la armada del Turco" in retaliation for the capture of Mahdia ("Africa" in contemporary sources).[37] Unsuccessful campaigns were then launched by the Ottoman Empire against the outpost of Oran in 1556 and 1563: in the former case the sultan once again ordered his forces to withdraw.[38]

The collapse of royal authority in France after 1559 ushered in a new phase in the "mare nostrum", characterised by a more overt and direct form of Christian–Muslim confrontation, as was clear at the Ottoman siege of Malta (1565), the expeditions under Selim II (1566–1574) to capture Cyprus (1570–1571) and Tunis (1574). Much has been written about these episodes. Essentially, a much smaller Christian armada (of reinforced galleys, with superior rowing crews) confronted a huge Ottoman fleet. For its part Venice chose to arm as many warships as possible, meaning that the Republic of St Mark's squadrons, like the huge flotillas serving the sultan, were in "poor order", with very high levels of mortality and relatively low levels of oarsmanship.[39] The fighting refused to die

35 Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, cit., Vol. 3, p. 482.

36 On the impressive size of Venetian forces in the mid-century, see Luciano Pezzolo, «Stato, guerra e finanza nella Repubblica di Venezia fra medioevo e prima età moderna», in Rossella Cancila (Ed.), *Mediterranea in armi (sec. XV–XVIII)*, Vol. 1, Palermo, Quaderni di Mediterranea, 2007, pp. 67-112, esp. 92. On the peace of 1540, see Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, cit., Vol. 3, p. 451; Mia Pia Pedani, *The Ottoman–Venetian Border (15th–18th Centuries)*, translated by Mariateresa Sala, Venice, Ca' Foscari, 2017, p. 57.

37 The blame for ending the truce is placed on the Barbary corsairs by Beatriz Alonso Acero, «El norte de África en el ocaso del emperador (1549–1558)», in Martínez Millán and Ezquerra Revilla (Eds.), *Carlos V y la quiebra*, cit., Vol. 1, pp. 387-414, esp. 393 *ff*.

38 Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado, «"El león animoso entre las balas": los dos cercos de Orán a mediados del siglo XVI», in Miguel Ángel de Bunes Ibarra and Beatriz Alonso Acero (Eds.), *Orán. Historia de la Corte Chica*, Madrid, Polifemo, 2011, pp. 13-54.

39 Williams, *Empire and Holy War*, cit., chapters 2 and 7. Much recent thinking and scholarship is presented in Àlex Claramunt Soto (Ed.), *Lepanto. El mar rojo de sangre*, Madrid, Desperta Ferro, 2021.

Title: L'Abordage du "Bertone" (The boarding of the *bertone*).
Series/Portfolio: Les Combats de Quatre Galères (The Battles of Four Galleys).
Artist: Jacques Callot (France, 1592–1635).
Date: early 17th century.
Accession Number: 40.52.21.
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Comment: This print portrays the *bertone* or high-sided ship in an unusual light. The *bertoni* have often been described as advanced sailing ships, but this one certainly appears a rather unwieldy vessel, with relatively little armament – easy prey to the pack of galleys.

down and re-emerged in the 1590s, in large part in response to the «Long Turkish War» in Hungary and the Balkans of 1593–1606.[40]

The traditional historiographic approach to the campaigns after 1580 is to emphasise that they were of little consequence, the inland sea being most firmly «out of the limelight», to use Fernand Braudel's famous phrase.[41] But comparison with the Atlantic operations of the day is instructive. In 1671 the Buccaneer Henry Morgan stormed Maracaibo, Portobello and Panama, key links in the Spanish imperial system in the Americas. He commanded some 600 men – a tiny force by Mediterranean standards.[42] Spain was hardly committed to Atlantic warfare. In the 1660s the Madrid government was unable to arrange for a naval blockade of Lisbon: the failure to do so had profound consequences, as it went a very long way towards ensuring the success of the Portuguese rebellion in the War of Restoration (1640–1668).[43]

Ottoman, Venetian, French and "Spanish" forces in the years after 1580 remained substantial. During its patrols of 1606 and 1607 Ahmed I's fleet perhaps had some 7,000 troops aboard it. At around this time there were some 71 galleys operating in Italy (not counting those of Venice and Castile or, as they are often known, Spain).[44] In 1608 Venice ran 33 light galleys, 3 galleasses and one galleon.[45] After 1645 Constantinople regularly mobilised some 150 vessels, including 40 galleys and 40 ships-of-the-line, to supply the expeditionary force in Crete.[46] Such a force would have employed well over 16,000 men.[47] In 1651 Alvise Mocenigo (commanding 24 galleys, 6 galleasses and 34 galleons) faced Husseinbeysade Ali, with 70 galleys, 40 large ships: so we have over 170

40 Jan Paul Niederkorn, *Die europäischen Mächte und der "Lange Türkenkrieg" Kaiser Rudolfs II, 1593–1606*, Vienna, Archiv für österreichische Geschichte, 1993.

41 Braudel, *Mediterranean*, cit., Vol. 2, pp. 1186-1188.

42 Esteban Mira Caballos, «Defensa Terrestre de los reinos de Indias», in O'Donnell y Duque de Estrada (Ed.), *Historia Militar de España*, cit., pp. 143-194, esp. 149.

43 Rafael Valladares Ramírez, «La dimensión marítima de la empresa de Portugal: limitación de recursos y estrategia naval en el declive de la monarquía hispánica», *Revista de Historia Naval*, 13, 51 (1995), pp. 19-32.

44 Williams, *Empire and Holy War*, cit., pp. 235-236.

45 Pezzolo, «Stato, guerra», cit., p. 73 fn. 9.

46 Rhoads Murphey, «The Ottoman Resurgence in the Seventeenth-Century Mediterranean: the Gamble and its Results», *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 8, 2 (1993), pp. 186-200, esp. 188-189, 192-193.

47 Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare 1500–1700*, London, UCL Press, 1999, p. 23.

warships, a fairly clear indication that the inland sea was still «in the limelight». And in 1654 well over 200 *navires de guerre* were mobilised.[48] In 1669 Louis XIV sent 6,000 troops, 15 ships of the line and a dozen galleys to try to save Candia: this was as many as had been sent to relieve Malta in the Great Siege of 1565.[49] In the 1690s the Sun King had over 12,000 rowers serving aboard his oared warships: this was around as many as Philip II had on his squadrons at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.[50]

True, it would be difficult to claim that these formidable fleets and amphibian forces were going anywhere, that they were deployed to advance some grand strategy or design. Perhaps the opposite was the case. The outbreak of the War for Crete (1645–1669) might well be seen as a strategic defeat for all of its participants. Essentially, Venice paid the price for a brutal Hospitaller attack in the Levant.[51] In 1644 an Ottoman fleet ventured to coastline the kingdom of Naples, with the apparent intention of diverting "Spanish" forces from the campaign front in Lombardy.[52] It achieved very little. As it made its way back home, a Hospitaller squadron undertook a lightening raid in the Levant, seizing a large ship carrying pilgrims to Alexandria. In the lead up to the sieges of Rhodes in 1522, Malta in 1565 and Cyprus in 1570, Christian corsair expeditions clearly provoked the Ottomans, in large part because they challenged the Ottoman claim to be the defender the Holy Sites of Islam, a cornerstone of the dynasty's authority.[53] In

48 Eickhoff, *Venezia, Vienna*, cit., pp. 66-67; Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., pp. 177-178.

49 Pormarède, *Pour en finir*, cit., p. 289.

50 In 1571 the king mobilised 78 galleys, nearly all with rowing crews of 164. Ernle Bamford, «The Procurement of Oarsmen for French Galleys, 1660–1748», *American Historical Review*, 65, 1 (1959), pp. 31-48, esp. 46; additional context in André Zysberg, *Les galériens. Vies et destins de 60 000 forçats sur les galères de France 1680–1748*, Paris, Seuil, 1987.

51 Soucek, «Naval Aspects», cit., pp. 249-253; Bono, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo*, cit., pp. 51-52. On the many frontiers, see Pedani, *The Ottoman–Venetian Border*, cit.

52 On fighting in Italy, see Davide Maffi, *Il Baluardo della Corona. Guerra, esercito, finanze e società nella Lombardia seicentesca (1630–1660)*, Florence, Le Monnier Università, 2007.

53 Andrew C. Hess, «The Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne Empire in the Age of the Oceanic Discoveries, 1453–1525», *The American Historical Review*, 75, 7 (1970), pp. 1892-1919. See also Nicolas Vatin, *L'Ordre de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem, l'Empire ottoman et la Méditerranée orientale entre les deux sièges de Rhodes (1480–1522)*, Paris, Collection Turcica, 1994; Maria Pia Pedani, «Some Remarks upon the Ottoman Geo-Political Vision of the Mediterranean in the Period of the Cyprus War (1570–1573)», in Colin Imber,

1644 history repeated itself, not as farce but as terror, with grim tales of drownings and pilgrims in chains and dungeons.[54] The subsequent conflict (1645–1669) was a fateful one for many of those who had championed it: sultan Ibrahim I (1640–1648) himself was deposed and done to death in August 1648. It is perhaps not difficult to understand why this conflict caused so much ill ease and resentment, having begun under very inauspicious circumstances. The Ottoman attack upon Crete was deemed illegal by a prominent Islamic judge, the Mufti Aziz Efendi, who pointed out that the Venetians had neither attacked the peoples of Islam (in 1644) nor been asked to surrender (in 1645). These conditions meant that the war taxes were levied illegally.[55]

Most of Crete was quickly overrun in 1645 but Candia (Chandax, modern Heraklion) was not finally overcome until 1669. This was most certainly a major war and its concluding operations represented a singular success for Mehmed IV and his empire. «Never before», wrote one witness, «had anyone seen such a tremendous battle and use of treasure and never will anyone see it again». Turkish sources stated that 30,000 Janissaries died in the final months of the siege of Candia; another account had it that a total of 75,000 soldiers perished in 1668 and 1669.[56] A third file listed 260,000 casualties for the years 1667–1669.[57]

The next Mediterranean war (the first War of the Morea, 1684–1699) was also clearly historically significant, as much of coastal Greece was won by the Republic of St Mark, which fought as part of the Holy League of pope Innocence XI Odescalchi (1676–1689). Morosini's expeditions of 1684 to 1688 were superb demonstrations of the potential of a new type of integrated amphibian campaigning. A disciplined and skilled vanguard force (some 8,000 troops

K. Kiyotaki and Rhoads Murphey (Eds.), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province, and the West*, Vol. 2, London & New York, I.B. Tauris, 2005, pp. 23-36; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans. The Hajj under the Ottomans 1517–1683*, London & New York, I.B. Tauris, 1994. A different emphasis, stressing political considerations, is provided by Soucek, «Naval Aspects», cit., pp. 220-221, 237.

54 For the background, see Victor Mallia Milanes, *Venice and Hospitaller Malta 1530–1798: Aspects of a relationship*, Marsa, PEG, 1993.

55 Soucek, «Naval Aspects», cit., p. 257.

56 Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., pp. 158, 208, 224; Marc David Baer, *Honoured by the Glory of Islam. Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe*, Oxford, New York, etc. OUP, 2008, pp. 155, 157-159.

57 Murphey, «The Ottoman Resurgence», cit., pp. 188-189, 192-193. Note Duffy's (*The Fortress*, cit., p. 221) comments on the historical importance of the siege of Candia.

in 1684; 9,500 in 1685; 10,000 in 1686) was transported aboard a taskforce consisting of galleys, ships-of-the-line, galleasses, freighters and lighter craft. In July 1688 some 15,000 men were landed at Chalcis, which had a garrison of some 6,000 Turks.[58] In early November, as the Venetian taskforce was heading back to its bases, William of Orange (later King William III, 1688–1702) landed an army of just over 14,000 veteran troops in Devon: at this point James II (1685–1688) abandoned London and his kingdoms. Direct comparison of the two campaigns is, of course, problematic. Still, it would seem that if the events of the "Glorious Revolution" were historically significant, then those at Lepanto, Athens and Chalcis must also deserve a place in the grand narrative of battlefield events and naval expeditions.

The strategic aims behind Mediterranean fighting remain open to debate. What did planners in Constantinople and Venice hope to achieve in their campaigns in the "mare nostrum"? Was the Ottoman Empire a warrior state, seeking to win new territories – indeed, needing to acquire new lands, revenues and peoples in order to palliate its inherent domestic instability? And, if so, was this a conquest state constructed according to Islamic precept, a latter-day caliphate?[59] But, if this is the case, did Süleymân and his successors really view the King of France as a vassal monarch who had "capitulated" to the Threshold of the Nest of Felicity?[60] Many sultans – Selim II, Murad III (1574–1595), Osman II (1603–1617), Mehmed IV (1648-1687) and even the brilliant and fearsome Murad IV (1623–1640) – needed a major campaign success to buttress their political capital at key moments.[61] Süleymân, for example, appears to have been conscious of the political capital to be won from battlefield triumphs in the first years of his sultanate.[62]

58 Guido Candiani, *Dalla galea alla nave di linea. Le trasformazioni della marina veneziana (1572–1699)*, Novi Ligure, Città del Silenzio, 2012, pp. 145-146, 148-149.

59 On this theme, see Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (Eds.), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, Leiden & Boston, Brill, 2005.

60 As suggested by Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*, New York & London, W.W. Norton & Company, 1982, pp. 44-45, 163. See also Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel. The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century*, London & New York, I.B. Tauris, 2011.

61 Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*, Cambridge, New York etc., CUP, 2010.

62 Belgrade was captured in 1521 and Rhodes in 1522. Soucek, «Naval Aspects», cit., p. 225; Colin Imber, «Frozen Legitimacy», in Karateke and Reinkowski (Eds.), *Legitimizing the Order*, cit., pp. 99-107.

It has often been argued that Venice was a victim of aggression in 1537, 1570 and 1644, and engaged in the fighting only with great reluctance: certainly, many contemporaries framed their analysis in these terms.[63] The Republic of St Mark, remarked an official in the early seventeenth-century, was not for war, «Venezia non è da guerra».[64] This perspective undoubtedly contains a great deal of truth. As we have seen, in 1539 and 1540 the Republic wasted no time in abandoning Paul III's Holy League and accepting humiliating conditions. But more perhaps lay behind this decision than losses during in Levant trade during the war against Süleymân and the threat to its dominion of the Adriatic posed by Doria's incursion in 1538. Supporting a battle fleet posed a huge challenge to it. As Luca Lo Basso has noted, from 1542 or so the *Serenissima* sought to overhaul its naval administration and recruit and deploy a different sort of rowing crew, a tacit admission that the demands of Paul III's Holy League had proven a steep challenge for its armada of free oarsmen («galeotti di libertà»).[65] In 1545 the first Venetian galley crewed by criminal oarsmen was armed.[66] Certainly, this was a break from its long and proud maritime traditions and a step towards the grim system used to equip the flotillas of Naples, Sicily, Leghorn and Malta, which was dependent upon criminals and slaves. But galleys of this sort were much more reliable and effective. In this context, it is noticeable that no action was undertaken by the Veneto–Papal squadrons in the summer of 1538 before the arrival of the galleys under Doria in Corfu in early September.

If the War for Crete began under a dark cloud for the Ottoman Empire, it also started in opportune circumstances for Venice, where many statesmen professed grave misgivings. From 1648 a group of senators and officials sought to negotiate a peace settlement.[67] True, the course of events took a radical new direction in 1684, when the Republic was keen to expand its territories and readily joined Innocence XI's Holy League. By this stage the evidence of Ottoman decline

63 In 1537 Doria predicted that Venice would quickly seek peace with Constantinople. Pourmarède, *Pour en finir*, cit., p. 223; Pryor, *Geography, technology and war*, cit., p. 182 (citing J.R. Hale).

64 Pezzolo, «Stato, guerra», cit., p. 110.

65 Luca Lo Basso, *Uomini da remo. Galee e galeotti del Mediterraneo in età moderna*, Milan, Selene, 2003, pp. 35-39 (Parte 1.1).

66 Pezzolo, «Stato, guerra», cit., p. 81.

67 Guido Candiani, «Conflitti d'intenti e di ragioni politiche, di ambizioni e di interessi nel patriziato veneto durante la Guerra di Candia», in *Studi Veneziani*, n.s., 36 (1998), p. 163.

Title: Galley under construction.
Artist: Attributed to Pietro Ciafferi (Italy, died c. 1650).
Medium: Etching.
Accession number: 1985.1.26.
Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington (Julius S. Held Collection).
Comment: Relatively little is known about construction techniques, but this fascinating print suggests the skills, manpower and resources needed to build a galley.

was too clear to be ignored by the canny patricians of the Rialto, although this perspective – that Mehmed IV's empire was on a clear downward trajectory – would be questioned by many scholars today, who tend to frame it as an «empire of difference», of adaption, toleration and logistical foresight.[68] It is also worth

68 See, for instance, Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference. The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge & New York, CUP, 2008. For an extremely stimulating comparative study, see Rudi Matthee, «The Decline of Safavid Persia in Comparative Perspective», *Journal of Persianate Studies*, 8 (2015), pp. 276-308. Turkish logistical expertise is stressed in Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*, cit., pp. 9-11, 52-53, 100-102.

noting that many historians have also interpreted Venetian bellicosity after 1684 as a symptom of its decadence and ossification, with the lagoon republic riven by bitter divisions which gave rise to notions that it was better «to fight a war that conserves us than a peace which destroys us».[69]

Any calculation or assessment of strategy is complicated by the imperfect tools and methods of warfare. Koron was judged to be too much of a risk in 1534, and five years later Castelnuovo could not be defended. Two large modern bastions, Nicosia and Famagusta, were surrendered in 1570 and 1571: some well-informed Castilian statesmen at the time suspected that more should have been done to prepare and defend both positions.[70] Nearly all of the defences of Crete were overcome in a couple of months in 1645. The Venetians quickly won Tenedos and Limnos in 1656, but then surrendered both islands (the former without a siege or any sort of fighting) following the reverse in the Fourth Battle of the Dardanelles (17–19 July 1657), in which Lazzaro Mocenigo, the famed, fearless commander, was killed.

Gunpowder fortifications in the Morea proved remarkably vulnerable in 1685, 1686 and 1687. This having been said, determined resistance was clearly put up at Chalcis (Negropont, Euboea) in 1688 and Crete in 1692, when the Republic of St Mark's forces were rebuffed after desperate bouts of fighting at the walls of Canea. Indeed, the siege of Chalcis lasted three months (from mid-July to mid-October).[71] The 1692 registers suggest that the best fortifications at Canea were those which the Republic of St Mark herself had erected before the attack launched under Ibrahim I: this detail perhaps poses the question of why the officers and soldiers of the Republic of St Mark had not managed to put up stiffer resistance in 1645.[72]

Accounts of the campaigns of 1538, 1571, 1657, 1669 and 1695 tend to focus

69 Mario Infelise and Anastasia Stouraiti, «L'ultima crociata», in Idem (Eds.), *Venezia e la guerra di Morea. Guerra, politica e cultura alla fine del '600*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2005, pp. 1-15.

70 Williams, *Empire and Holy War*, cit., pp. 217-218.

71 In 1688 contemporaries were convinced that Morosini made a decisive error in allowing the Ottomans to retain the small hilltop position at Karà Baba, which commanded a bridge into the principal bulwark. Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., pp. 349, 354, 361.

72 Guido Candiani, *I vascelli della Serenissima. Guerra, politica e costruzioni navali a Venezia in età moderna, 1650–1720*, Venice, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2009, p. 257.

on claims of heroism and betrayal, martial skills and incompetence.[73] Behind the sometimes operatic terms of registers, narratives and trials there perhaps lies the very real sense that Athens, Chios, Navarino, Modon and Koron were not only imperfectly fortified positions but that they could not be fortified and made "inexpungable", with cavernous cellars and cisterns, thick angular walls, a safe anchorage and a productive hinterland – at least not in the timeframe available to the Venetian forces.[74] Monemvasia, on the other hand, presents a very different type of military failure: the massive fort took no less than seventeen months to win, finally succumbing to forces under Girolamo Corner in August 1690; it was surrendered by Ferigo Badoer in 1715, before a shot had been fired but after several rounds of (frantic) negotiation. The obvious theme in this episode was, once again, the absence of fighting spirit amongst the officers and garrison; but this failing can be closely tied to tactical and operational concerns – the strict orders issued to keep the Republic's fleet well away from the Ottoman armada; the fact that the fortress appears not to have offered an anchorage to larger ships and was only reachable by smaller vessels.[75]

Venice, notes Christopher Duffy, constructed a «remarkable series of five detached forts on the summit of the Palamedi Mountain» overlooking Nauplia (Napoli di Romania), 700 feet above sea level.[76] This position was stormed after an encirclement of just eight days. The key strongpoints in Greece (the lower bastion at Nauplia, built during the Byzantine period; Monemvasia; the Acrocorinth and the "castello" on the acropolis at Athens) may well have been of the "old design", with long, thin walls (perhaps 40cm thick, as Haris A. Kalligas states), but they harnessed formidable geographical qualities. On the other hand, their shortcomings may have been far from unique, as the great bastions of Casale

73 Mercieca, «Battle of Preveza», cit.; Pujeau, «Preveza in 1538»; Candiani, «Conflitti d'intenti», cit.; Idem, *Dalla galea*, cit., pp. 161-163.

74 On the many difficulties in using Koron and Modon during the Middle Ages, see Ruthy Gertwagen, «Harbours and facilities along the eastern Mediterranean Sea lanes to Outremer», in John H. Pryor (Ed.), *Logistics of Warfare in the Age of the Crusades*, London & New York, Routledge, 2006, pp. 95-118, esp. 108-111. Note also Pryor's (*Geography, technology, and war*, cit., p. 291) concluding comments on Monemvasia, Koron and Modon («just roadsteads») and water provision.

75 The Venetian attack began in 1687, although a close blockade was maintained only for the final 17 months. Haris A. Kalligas, *Monemvasia. A Byzantine city state*, London & New York, Routledge, 2010, chapters IX, X, XII; on its shallow anchorage, pp. 107-109.

76 Duffy, *The Fortress*, cit., pp. 223-224.

Monferrato in Mantua and Pinerolo were lost by Louis XIV during the Nine Years War (1688–1697). Even France, then, with its vast resources and army, found it very difficult to retain strategic forward positions, although the Sun King was certainly guilty of a series of serious misjudgements in this conflict.[77] It was not until the conclusion of the fighting on the other fronts that Paris was able to dispatch a formidable expeditionary force to claim Barcelona. This having been said, by 1697 the French were pushing against an empty door: as Antonio Espino has shown, the fall of the "City of the Count" was largely due to the disorder and demoralised state of its defenders.[78]

While scholars have emphasised the impact of the lateen sail, which allowed crews to clip into the wind and therefore to sail much more efficiently and quickly, it is very clear that governments invariably failed to recruit enough seamen.[79] This leaves open the possibility, seldom (if ever) entertained by scholars but implicit in much correspondence, that admirals were simply unable to make use of this new technology because of manpower deficiencies. As Arturo Pacini has underlined, officers found that sailing ships and galleys together posed a serious challenge in the sixteenth-century.[80] A great deal of evidence suggests that ships, freighters, merchantmen, long boats and skiffs were (very) expensive to hire and few in number.[81]

Many seventeenth-century expeditions underlined the vitality of oared warcraft, their ability to sail with ships-of-the-line. This was especially so when the rowing crews were experienced, as the history of Venice's Adriatic flotilla in the 1640s and 1650s tends to underline.[82] In 1660 Antonio Priuli, captain of

77 Guy Rowlands, «Louis XIV, Vittorio Amedeo II and French Military Failure in Italy, 1689–96», *The English Historical Review*, 115, 462 (2000), pp. 534-569.

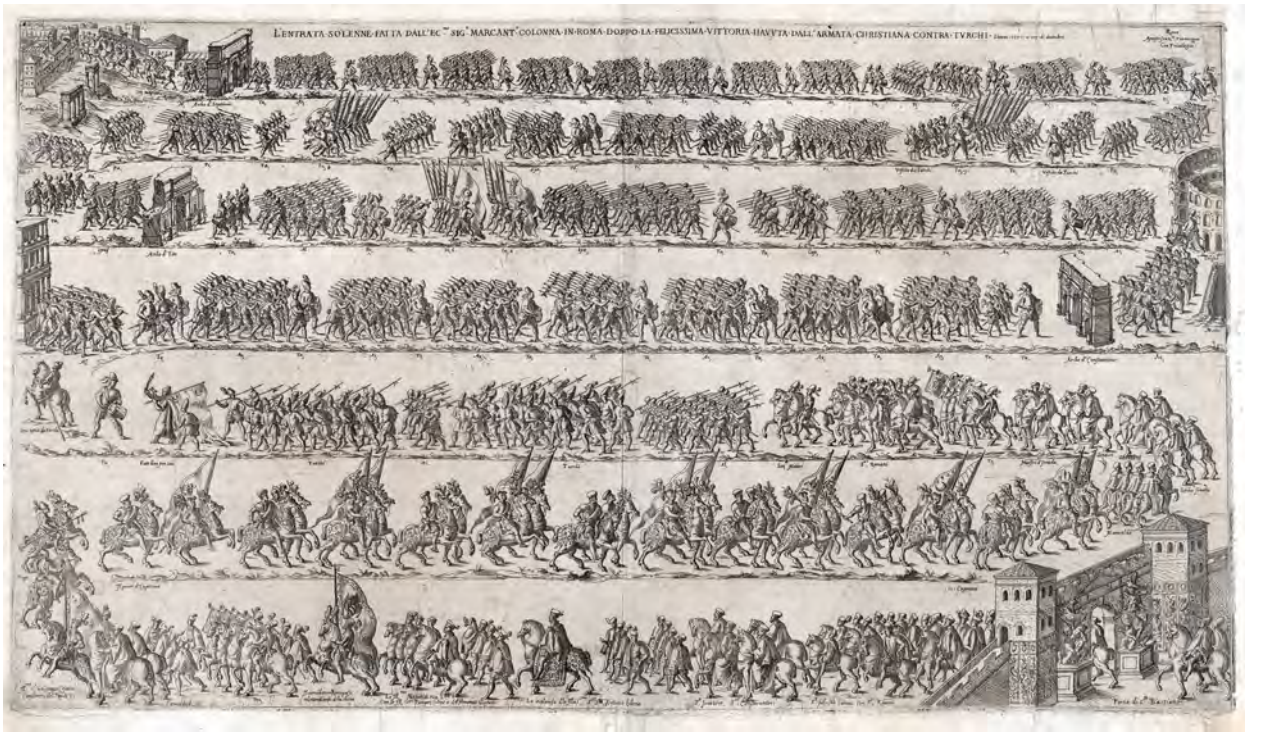
78 Antonio Espino López, *Las guerras de Cataluña. El teatro de Marte, 1652–1714*, Madrid etc., EDAF, 2014.

79 Candiani, *I vascelli*, cit., pp. 39, 43-44, 172-173, 424-426; Murphey, «Ottoman Resurgence», pp. 190-191; Geoffrey Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power 1688–1697. From the* guerre de escadre *to the* guerre de course, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1974, p. 12 *ff*.

80 Arturo Pacini, *«Desde Rosas a Gaeta». La costruzione della rotta spagnola nel Mediterraneo occidentale nel secolo XVI*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2013, pp. 157-169, 188-190.

81 Candiani, *I vascelli*, cit., pp. 169-176, 240; Davies, «Administration and Settlement», p. 85.

82 Domagoj Madunić, «The Adriatic Naval Squadron, 1645–1669: Defence of the Adriatic during the War for Crete», *Povijesni prilozi*, 45 (2013), pp.199-235, esp. 213-217.



Title: The entry of Marcantonio Colonna and the Christian army in Rome after victory at the battle of Lepanto, December 11, 1571.
Artist: Francesco Tramezzino (Italy, died 1576).
Year: c. 1571.
Medium: Etching.
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Comment: Mediterranean holy war can be seen as an extension of political interests by other means. An idea of the pageantry and ceremonial dimensions of the crusade is conveyed by this print.

the Venetian ships of the line (*Capitano delle Navi*) despaired of his inability to intercept Ottoman galley convoys when the elements were favourable to the enemy: «to pretend that the ships can catch galleys is to want to believe that tortoise can arrest the hares, and that with carts it is possible to capture foxes». Nightfall was also an advantage to the oared squadrons.[83]

Battles and skirmishes might in fact be mined for compelling – if overlooked –

83 CANDIANI, *I vascelli*, cit., p. 58.

evidence of the tactical shortcomings of sailing fleets. The heavy Ottoman losses at the Third Battle of the Dardanelles (1656), for example, were almost entirely the result of Mehmed IV's ships (both galleons and galleys) being caught on a lee shore. In this supremely disadvantageous position, they were both bombarded and set alight. Fireships were clearly determinative in this episode, as in many others. As with Lepanto in 1571, the reverse of 1656 can be largely explained by the "poor order" of the Ottoman galleys. Their crews consisted of a majority of inexperienced oarsmen, who proved highly susceptible to diseases and exerted little strength in the oar stroke as a consequence of their physical weakness and poor technique, resulting in an irregular – and therefore inefficient – rhythm.[84] Many officials and soldiers, moreover, appear to have taken flight at the first opportunity, to the chagrin of the recently-appointed Grand Vizier, Köprüllü Mehmed Paşa (governed 1656–1661).[85] Again, the determination and resilience of the combatants – or singular lack of it – appeared to be a decisive factor: put another way, gunpowder weaponry only functioned if there were soldiers brave enough to use it.

The development of the mixed-vessel taskforce constituted a fascinating, if neglected, theme in the naval history of the century. Philip IV's offer in 1639 (above) to assist Venice explicitly depended upon the joint deployment of both oared and sail-driven warships, his *galeras reforzadas* and *galeones*. The large scale confrontations at the mouth of the Dardanelles in the mid-1650s, like numerous skirmishes and chases in this period, also underlined the circumstances in which galleys could be deployed with galleons for maximum effect.[86] As Guido Candiani has argued, the technical and administrative successes of the Republic of St Mark in the War of Crete were considerable.[87] French operations against

84 Williams, «Mare Nostrum», cit., pp. 94-97. The vast majority of oarsmen aboard the "armada del Turco" were employed for one year as a form of tax service, resulting in sickly, ineffective crews. Colin Imber, «The Navy of Süleyman the Magnificent», *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 6 (1980), pp. 211-282; Emilia Themopoulou, «Les kürekçi de la flotte ottomane au XVIIe siècle», in Zachariadou (Ed.), *The Kapudan Pasha*, cit., pp. 165-179.

85 He ruthlessly hunted down and executed deserters, of whom there were many. Eickhoff, *Venezia, Vienna*, cit., pp. 161, 162, 165.

86 Mocenigo used galleys to resupply the ships-of-the-line and hunt down stranded or abandoned enemy vessels. Eickhoff, *Venezia, Vienna*, cit., pp. 156-165. Numerous examples of the navigational qualities of galleys in the 1640s and 1650s can be found in Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., chapters V, VI, VII.

87 Guido Candiani, «Stratégie et diplomatie Vénitiennes: navires anglo-hollandais et blocus

Palermo in 1676 and Barcelona in 1697, like the heavy bombardments of Algiers and Genoa in the 1680s, were also undertaken by taskforces consisting of galleys and sail-driven, high-sided ships.[88] In many other campaigns of the second half of the century galleys towed the men-of-war into position: this was the case, for example, on 25 July 1669, when the oared warships pulled the French flotilla of high-sided gunships into range of the Ottoman siege works around Candia. But, like so many other manifestations of the "military revolution", this bombardment proved largely ineffective and had little bearing on the course of events.[89]

This is not to deny that things could very quickly go wrong, as the career of Antonio Zen demonstrated in the mid-1690s. On 16 September 1694 he failed to engage an Ottoman navy in seas to the north of Chios. True, this episode underlined that oared warships could be highly effective in positioning high-sided gunships for attack; but, like so many other offensives of its kind, it ended in inaction and (bitter) recrimination. Zen appears to have lost his nerve at the moment of truth and then failed to capitalise upon a later opportunity to destroy the enemy ships in harbour, after they had been abandoned by their galley escort. These were fateful mistakes, as a resurgent Ottoman navy inflicted heavy damage on the Venetian fleet near Chios (9 February 1695), in a confrontation in which three *nave* caught fire; the new Kaptanpaşa, Amcazade Hüseyin, did not adopt the line-ahead formation, but concentrated his fire on the enemy ships of the line.[90]

Conclusions

Mediterranean campaigns of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries do not, therefore, fit in with the prevailing interpretations about a "military revolution" and the sea's abandonment. Paradoxically, nearly all campaigns presented a direct and inescapable contradiction between the grand intentions of the protagonists and the realities on the ground. Finances were another matter: none of these

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des Dardanelles, 1646–1659», *Revue d'Histoire Maritime*, 9, (2008), pp. 251-282.

88 Guy Rowlands, «The King's Two Arms: French Amphibian Warfare in the Mediterranean under Louis XIV, 1664–1697», in Mark C. Fissel and David Trim (Eds.), *Amphibian Warfare 1000–1700. Commerce, State Formation and European Expansion*, Leiden & Boston, Brill, 2006, pp. 263-314.

89 Some 12,000 to 15,000 shots were discharged. Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., pp. 224-227.

90 Soucek, « The Straits of Chios», cit., p. 151 *ff*; Setton, *Venice, Austria*, cit., pp. 395-396; Candiani, *Dalla galea*, cit., pp. 160-162.

politics could really afford war.[91] The Venetian experience in Greece after 1685, like the history of the Spanish outposts at Algiers (lost in 1529), Bona or Bône (abandoned in 1541), Tripoli (surrendered, with barely a fight, by the Hospitallers in 1551), Mahdia (destroyed and abandoned in 1554), Bougie (lost in 1555), La Goletta (lost in 1574), La Mamora (lost in 1681), Larache (lost in 1687) and Oran (lost in 1708), demonstrated how difficult it was to construct, equip and maintain frontier fortresses. Ceuta was, apparently, the exception to the rule, able to withstand a siege that stretched over decades. But the British wasted little time in abandoning Tangiers in 1684.[92]

Some decisive "harbour positions" were not really harbours at all: La Goletta, Monemvasia and Santa Maura in fact commanded lagoons. In this context Philip IV's reservations about an extended Levant venture in 1639 are clearly understandable. The idea that wars were fought for the control of a chain of "strongly fortified strategic positions" represents a theoretical formulation, an assessment of what would have occurred had geography, economics and technology conspired to adorn campaigns with a general direction, purpose or rationale. The reality, in the Mediterranean and, perhaps, in the Greater Caribbean, was a chaotic series of offensives based upon the peculiarities of navigation in both deep and shallow waters; the "narrowness" of the seas; the need to support forward positions that were tenable only if their garrisons were convinced that help was coming; and the drive for political ascendancy in court cultures that prioritised confessional warfare and exhibited a marked tendency towards volatility.

In a famous, brilliant aside, Voltaire observed that the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 led nowhere: it had no consequence other than to save Crete and Corfu from Ottoman attack. His assessment remains open to debate – no less an authority than Fernand Braudel disagreed with it – but he was clearly correct in direct,

91 On the ruinously destructive financial cost of seventeenth-century fighting for Iran, Madrid, Naples, Constantinople, France and other states, see the attempt at synthesis Williams, «Mare Nostrum», cit., pp. 79-81. Pezzolo suggests that war spending was manageable for seventeenth-century Venice, largely because of growing incomes. Pezzolo, «Stato, guerra», cit., esp. pp. 101-103.

92 Davies, «Administration and Settlement», *passim*; Antonio Sánchez-Gijón, «La Goleta, Bona, Bugía y los presidios del reino de Túnez en la política mediterránea del Emperador», in Carlos José Hernando Sánchez (Ed.), *Las Fortificaciones de Carlos V*, Madrid, Ministerio de Defensa, 2000, pp. 625-651; Matar, *Britain and Barbary*, cit., p. 142; Anne Brogini and María Ghazali, «Un enjeu espagnol en Méditerranée: les présides de Tripoli et de La Goulette au XVIe siècle», *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* (On line), 70 (2005), pp. 9-43.

Title: Galley with deck covered by sails.
Year: probably c. 1654/1655.
Artist: Stefano Della Bella (Florence, 1610–1664).
Medium: Etching.
Accession number: 1972.66.6.
Series Title: Views of Livorno [Vesme 844–849].
Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington (Alisa Mellon Bruce Fund).
Comment: Here a crew apparently takes shelter under the sails, a fascinating episode in social history of the oared warships, about which relatively little is known.

geographical terms: Mediterranean conflict between the Ottomans and Venice did in fact go nowhere.[93] Venice occupied much of the Morea in the war of 1463–1479 and lost it to sultan Beyazit II (1481–1512) in 1499–1502. Monemvasia and

93 BRAUDEL, *Mediterranean*, cit., Vol. 2, pp. 1103-1106.

Nauplia followed suit in 1540.[94] The coastal towns and harbours then exchanged hands a further two times, often without a shot being fired in anger, during the two wars of the Morea (1684–1699; 1714–1718).[95]

On the other hand, many contemporaries most certainly *did* have a clear idea of what purpose the fighting served – to divert forces from other theatres of action. Commanders and statesmen were profoundly aware of the symbiotic relationship between events in Hungary and Greece: whether-or-not Doria's intervention in 1532 served to divert Süleymân from Vienna, Charles V's "grand strategy" was caught on a constant dilemma between his interests and commitments in central Europe and campaigns of direct value to the subjects of his Mediterranean kingdoms.[96] In 1541 the Emperor chose to sail to try to capture Algiers, rather than to attempt to save Buda and Pest from Süleymân.[97] In 1570 the Morisco rebellion in Granada provided the essential context and background to Selim II's attack upon Cyprus. In turn, the Mediterranean operations of 1570–1571 prevented Philip II from undertaking a more thorough repression in the Netherlands, as the leading rebel, William of Orange, well appreciated.[98] But then, in 1572, concerns about the situation in Zeeland delayed the expedition into the Levant, which concluded in the frustrating efforts at Navarino.[99] In these years many statesmen – the pope foremost among them – hoped for a campaign in Hungary to coincide with the Christian advance in the Morea; during the Long Turkish War (1593–1606) the other side of the equation came to the fore, as statesmen in Vienna and Rome sought to engineer naval expeditions into the Ionian and Aegean seas to divert Ottoman attention and resources away from

94 Pryor, *Geography, technology and war*, cit., pp. 181-182.

95 For a detailed and up-to-date presentation of these two wars, see Eric Pinzelli, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman: les guerres de Morée (1684–1718)*, Athens, 2020.

96 Aurelio Espinosa, «The Grand Strategy of Charles V (1500–1558): Castile, War and Dynastic Priority in the Mediterranean», *Journal of Early Modern History*, 9, 3–4 (2005), pp. 239-283, esp. 267.

97 James D. Tracy, *Charles V, Impresario of War. Campaign Strategy, International Finance and Domestic Politics*, Cambridge etc., CUP, 2002, pp. 170-172.

98 John Elliott, «Ottoman–Habsburg Rivalry: The European Perspective», in Inalcik and Kafadar (Eds.), *Süleymân the Second*, cit., pp. 159-163, esp. 161 (citing Geoffrey Parker). Charles V had hoped that his brother, Ferdinand, would lead a campaign in Hungary in 1538. Poumarède, *Pour en finir*, cit., pp. 228-229.

99 Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, cit., Vol. 4, pp. 1078-1081.

Hungary and the Balkans.[100] In 1609 Philip III decided to expel the Moriscos, because he feared a rebellion in Valencia timed to coincide with the arrival of an Ottoman fleet and simultaneous offensives by "bad Christians".[101] The reverse under Kara Mustafa Paşa at Vienna in 1683 and subsequent chaos opened the door to the Venetian conquest of the Peloponnese in 1685, 1686 and 1687, and the unsuccessful ventures at the Negropont, Crete and Chios; in 1717 Austrian intervention, and the skills of Count Johann Mathias von der Schulenburg, saved Corfu for Venice but came too late to prevent the loss of the Morea.

A similar pattern might be discerned between campaigns in the inland sea and offensives in Italy and central Europe: Süleymân repeatedly deployed his armada and land forces (1532, 1537, 1543–1544, 1556 and 1558) to try to assist Bourbon advances in Milan and Naples, while fighting in Italy in 1522 and 1645 made it impossible to form a Christian alliance to save Rhodes and Crete respectively. After 1686 Louis XIV was motivated by the need to prevent the total collapse of the Ottoman position in the Balkans, which appeared a distinct possibility following the loss of Buda.[102] Finally, the destruction of the French fleet in Toulon in 1707 opened the door to the Austrian conquest of Naples. "Il regno" was, in fact, central to the entire story, both as the principal naval base of the Spanish Monarchy and as the object of French ambitions and machinations.

The underlying assumption of contemporaries over many generations, from the time of Andrea Doria and Süleymân the Magnificent to that of Francesco Morosini and Mehmed IV, was that the leading powers were incapable of fighting in more than one theatre of action; they seem also to have acted on the understanding that military deployments in Hungary and the Danube theatre, in Greece, Milan, Catalonia, Portugal and North Africa, and even, to a large degree, in northern Europe or Iran, depended upon the transfer of resources across the Mediterranean. At the same time, crusade and *gaza* were the cornerstone of political culture and vital to projections of royal majesty. If galley campaigns went nowhere, then they were not entirely without consequence and meaning. Mediterranean warfare was a means to an end somewhere else.

100 *Ibid.*, pp. 1061, 1064, 1066-1067; Niederkorn, *Die europäischen Mächte*, *passim*.

101 Williams, *Empire and Holy War*, cit., pp. 161-170.

102 Rowlands, «Louis XIV, Vittorio Amedeo II», cit., pp. 535-536, 566-567. See also David Quiles Albero, «La guerra de Candía (1645–1669): ¿Causa común en una Europa dividida?», *Tiempos Modernos*, 38, 1 (2019), pp. 176-195.

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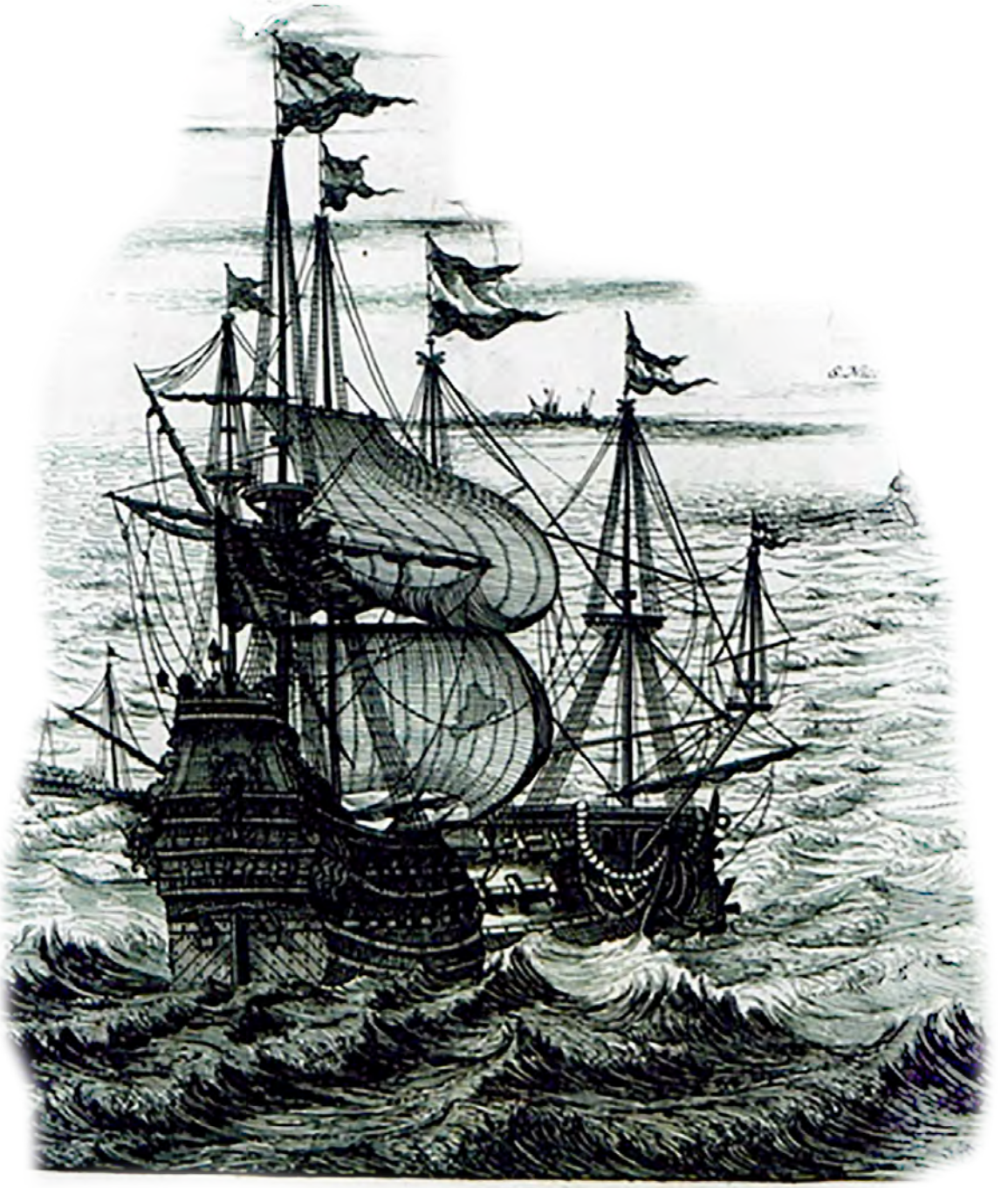

Icon of the naval Battle of Curzolari (Echinades in Greek) islands, by the Cretan painter Georgios Klontzas, last decades of the 16th century; one of the most famous depictions of the naval Battle of Lepanto in post-Byzantine art. Courtesy of the National Historical Museum, Athens (cat. n. 3578).

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